
The United States Navy on the World Wide Web
A service of the Navy Office of Information, Washington DC
send feedback/questions to comments@chinfo.navy.mil
The United States Navy web site is found on the Internet at
<http://www.navy.mil>

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News # 03-28 - July 24, 2003

-- Fleet Hospital Eight Pulls Up Stakes
-- Twentynine Palms Hospital Staff Experience Big City Trauma
-- New and Improved TRICARE Web Site Features Enhanced Search Engine
-- NEHC Provides Deployment Medical Surveillance Information at a Click of a Mouse
-- Pediatrics Playtime - A Different Form of Therapy
-- Health Watch: Healthy Swimming

Fleet Hospital Eight Pulls Up Stakes
By JO1(SW) Stacey Moore, Fleet Hospital Eight Public Affairs

BREMERTON, Wash. -- After caring for almost 1,400 inpatients and performing more than 250 surgeries, Fleet Hospital Eight (FH8) pulled up stakes in Rota, Spain, and is heading home. The tents and equipment have been crated up and stowed into shipping containers for transit back to Naval Hospital Bremerton, Wash.

The fleet hospital, initially deployed Feb. 16, provided medical support to sick and injured warriors deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

"These American heroes deserved and received world-class health care and caring from a highly motivated team of professionals assigned to FH8," said Capt. Pat Kelly, FH8 commanding officer.

Drawing from 20 commands throughout the United States, FH8 hit the ground running with a 116-bed expeditionary medical facility and later transitioned to a larger, more capable 250-bed fleet hospital.

"We were needed early on to establish an alternative medical treatment capability in the communication zone, and once established, continued with our original plan to build a more capable Fleet Hospital," Kelly said.

To transport patients to and from the flight-line, the fleet hospital staff integrated the Air Force's Mobile Aeromedical Staging Facility into the hospital structure, allowing safer, more comfortable patient

movement.

A first for a field unit was the mental health department's new proactive evaluation and intervention process. Applying lessons learned from previous conflicts, the department evaluated patients, screening for early signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Appropriate interventions were taken early on to preclude future related problems. Prior to returning warriors to their home units, the staff provided redeployment briefs to address normal stressors associated with family separation.

Another first, the management information personnel built a successful Local Area Network, or LAN, and used multiple new IM/IT systems in a field environment, including the Defense Medical Logistics Support System.

Kelly said, "I couldn't be more proud of this staff. They cared for every patient with great care and professionalism. It was a great honor - a once in a lifetime opportunity - to be deployed with them and do what we did."

- usn -

Twentynine Palms Hospital Staff Experience Big City Trauma
By Lt. Jonathan S. Edwards, Robert E. Bush Hospital, Twentynine Palms, Ca.

TWENTYNINE PALMS, Ca. -- Four staff members from the Robert E. Bush Hospital at Twentynine Palms, Ca. attended the Navy Trauma Training Center (NTTC) in Los Angeles recently. NTTC occupies a small part of the massive Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center.

The team cared for over 150 trauma patients with injuries such as gunshot and stab wounds, and serious full-thickness burns. They assisted with massive blood transfusions and open chest heart massage.

NTTC is a training program for Navy doctors, nurses, and hospital corpsmen to develop the fundamental skills necessary to care for patients who have sustained traumatic combat injuries. Previous graduates have served in Fleet Surgical teams and Shock Trauma Platoons during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

For more information on NTTC visit the website <http://nshssd.med.navy.mil/>.

- usn -

New and Improved TRICARE Web Site Features Enhanced Search Engine

WASHINGTON -- The Health Affairs (HA) and TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) Web sites are now consolidated into one resource for the Military Health System. In addition to a standard look and feel throughout the Web site, There are many upgrades that include a more robust search engine, text-only A-to-Z browsing, additional quick links and resources, and consolidated news and news sources. Users will find it easier to navigate for regional information, TRICARE Fact Sheets, the TRICARE Handbook and pertinent HA Policy Information.

There are three portals to access the new site, depending on the users needs. The TRICARE Beneficiary portal (www.tricare.osd.mil) contains beneficiary information. The TRICARE Provider portal (www.tricare.osd.mil/provider.cfm) contains links for provider certification as well as other information. The Military Health System portal (www.ha.osd.mil) contains HA and TMA organization information; MHS strategic plans and policies; and messages from Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

There are new search options to help the infrequent Internet user. The search upgrade also includes the ability to search different categories simultaneously. These can be as general or as specific as the user needs, such as searching the entire site or by format (e.g., Web sites, TRICARE Handbook, news releases, fact sheets, etc.)

- usn -

NEHC Provides Deployment Medical Surveillance Information at a Click of a Mouse

By Ms. Becky Washburn, Navy Environmental Health Center

A dynamic multidisciplinary team of epidemiologists, health educators, and web editors continually post, revise and update the Navy Environmental Health Center's (NEHC) Deployment Surveillance web page to ensure that the highest quality health care is delivered to those who make sacrifices in the most hazardous workplaces - deployments.

Deployments present many challenges that may lead to non-battle related injuries and diseases. Some symptoms of such diseases may not surface until after troops return home or even months later. The Under

Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness mandated the Enhanced Post-Deployment Health Assessments (PDHA) for active duty and reserve personnel, especially those involved in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, including those who did not go ashore.

"The NEHC Deployment Surveillance page is designed to give Navy and Marine Corps health care providers information through an organized reference page which is accessible at a mouse click, with minimal interruption to their clinic/patient time, and at their convenience, 24/7," said NEHC Population Health Director Capt. Bruce Bohnker, Medical Corps.

Check out the page at
www-nehc.med.navy.mil/prevmed/epi/depsurv.htm.

- usn -

Pediatrics Playtime - A Different Form of Therapy
By JO1(SW/AW) AnTuan Guerry, National Naval Medical Center Public Affairs

BETHESDA, Md. -- The Pediatrics Clinic at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) is taking care to another level - eye level for their young and active patients.

Every Monday, the Pediatrics Clinic waiting area at NNMC in Bethesda, MD, is turned into a veritable playground thanks to child-life therapist, Lynda Segel. Opening her big gray box on wheels filled with games, crafts, coloring books and educational toys, she instantly becomes a hit with the children.

"Child-life therapy's goal is to ease emotional stress and strain," Segel explains. "We try to keep the development of the child going so he (the patient) can still continue to grow and have a life even though he may be hospitalized or in an outpatient status."

Although most of her time is spent in the waiting area with the children, Segel says she sometimes assists doctors with a child requiring an IV or a shot. To help, Segel uses special diversion tactics, like putting on a clown nose to distract the child from the procedure.

Segel, whose experience spans more than two decades, has been working at NNMC since 1990. Through her dedication to children, Segel built the foundation for programs like human-animal therapy bond, which is like a portable petting zoo. She also established

community outreach programs that brought in singers, dancers, musicians and entertainers from all over the area.

Wendy Fuller, who makes a two-hour drive from Dahlgren, Va., to NNMCM for her children's doctor visits, says that what Segel does with the children is "absolutely wonderful."

"I was really excited when I saw her here again. I didn't know this (Child-Life) was a recurring event," she explains. "I was here last week when the Friends of the National Zoo exhibit was here. It was great for the children. After our long drive, it gives the children something nice to look forward to."

Fuller's 7-year-old son, Ethan, has his opinion on what's the best part about having "Ms. Lynda," around.

"I like coloring the best," he boasts. "I don't know why. I just like it."

What Ethan probably doesn't realize either is that he's not only having fun, but he's also learning. Segel's program is based around education as well as fun. From developing hand and eye coordination to expanding a child's creative spirit, the time Segel spends with NNMCM's pediatric outpatients may be short but everlasting.

"I love the fact that I'm able to work helping people out. It's what my life is," Segel adds with a smile. "If I can make someone smile or laugh, or I know that I've occupied them enough to take their mind off of something that could be painful or uncomfortable, then I've done a good job."

- usn -

Healthwatch: Health Swimming
By Aveline V. Allen, Bureau of Medicine & Surgery

WASHINGTON -- Are you an avid swimmer or just like to get your feet wet? Swimming is a good exercise to stay healthy and fit, however, as with any exercise, safety first is the name of the game.

With the summer months upon us, many children and adults are flocking to swimming pools and beaches to keep cool. Parents need to ensure their children will be safe in the water while swimming.

"Young children require close supervision while swimming," stated Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Blair, Medical

Corps, staff pediatrician and emergency room doctor,
Pediatrics Department, National Naval Medical Center
(NNMC), Bethesda, Md.

According to the Centers for Diseases Control (CDC), although modern innovative methods of water disinfection systems and environmental enhancements have made our recreational water safer during the past century, the number of water illnesses as a result of swimming has risen over the past decade.

Parents and children need to be aware of Recreational Water Illnesses (RWI), as they may spread throughout the water, and possibly be harmful to all persons in the water at the time. Healthy swimming behaviors should be adhered to while in the water, in an effort to reduce the risk of becoming sick and spreading germs, according to the CDC.

"Children with diarrhea should not be allowed to go swimming," added Blair. "Rarely, serious potential infections from a bacteria called E Coli have been transmitted in this manner. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) does not endorse swimming lessons below age 4, and, therefore one must question the advisability and necessity of allowing a child not yet toilet trained to use community pools."

You and your children can do your part to make swimming healthy, safe and fun for everybody in the pool. There are six PLEAs developed by the CDC to promote healthy swimming.

PLEASE:

- Do not swim when you have diarrhea
- Do not swallow the pool water
- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet or changing diapers
- Change diapers in the bathroom, not at poolside
- Take your kids on bathroom breaks often
- Wash your child thoroughly with soap and water before swimming

By adhering to these six PLEAs, the spread of germs and the number of RWIs can be reduced drastically. Although chlorine can kill certain germs caused by RWI, it doesn't work instantly. Some germs may settle in pool water for many days because they are resistant to chlorine.

The CDC indicates those persons more prone to get sick from RWI include children, pregnant women and those with compromised immune systems. However, anyone can develop RWI while in the water with other swimmers if

the above standard safety precautions are not practiced.

In addition to community pool swimming, ocean swimming may also have potential risks.

"Aside from the obvious risks, ocean swimming carries some additional hazards," said Blair. "The ocean is not a sterile environment, and, it is possible to acquire bacterial and other infections that are unique and potentially serious."

Blair emphasizes that "with a little common sense one can enjoy and benefit from water activities."

Additional information on healthy swimming can be found at www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/.